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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 000107

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [SNAR](#) [PE](#)

SUBJECT: SL Leader Artemio Allegedly Calls for Truce

CLASSIFIED BY: James D. Nealon, DCM; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) A man identifying himself as Sendero Luminoso (SL - Shining Path) leader Comrade "Artemio" called a rural radio station on January 26, announcing in a live broadcast that SL would stop all military action in order to sit down and negotiate with the GOP. Artemio's call for a truce follows on the heels of a former SL member's recent announcement of a new SL-affiliated political organization. Peruvian authorities have rejected the notion of negotiations with SL members, and analysts are scratching their heads about what these events mean about SL in the long run.

¶2. (C) A man identifying himself as Sendero Luminoso (SL - Shining Path) leader Comrade "Artemio" called a radio station in Aucayacu (Upper Huallaga Valley - UHV) on January 26, announcing in a live broadcast that SL will stop all military action in order to sit down and negotiate with the GOP, the Red Cross, churches, and other groups. Artemio heads the "Acuerdista" faction of SL in the UHV. This faction remains loyal to SL founder Abimael Guzman, in contrast to the reputed rival "Proseguir" faction in the Valley of the Apurimac and Ene Rivers (VRAE), and has been closely associated with local coca growers. In his message, Artemio said he regretted the deaths of young police and military members ("cannon fodder") incurred during clashes with SL, and said his group would from now on only defend itself from attacks, but not initiate assaults. Artemio denied being a "narcoterrorist" (a term used by some analysts and politicians), and claimed he was and always would be a socio-political fighter for the people. At the same time, he surprisingly disassociated himself from the local coca growers' association. He also asked listeners to ignore the large sum (around \$300,000) offered for information leading to his capture, claiming that he is working for peace for all Peruvians.

¶3. (C) Artemio's call for a truce follows on the heels of a former SL member's announcement of a new political movement. Just days ago, Dr. Alfredo Crespo Reynoso, former SL member and attorney for incarcerated SL founder and maximum leader Abimael Guzman, announced the launching of a new political organization called "The Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights," with an eye towards its participation in the 2011 presidential elections. Speaking before an audience in Ayacucho's "Teacher's House," Crespo asserted that the new organization appears at a time when the country is undergoing its "second largest generalized crisis." He also indicated that the group would be composed of popular organizations, artists, intellectuals, and relatives of terrorists currently serving prison sentences. Crespo said that the aims of the Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights include the

strengthening of labor rights, child protection, freedom of speech, and efforts to reinstate workers who were fired because of their political affiliations. (Note: Crespo has long maintained that Abimael Guzman is not a terrorist. He was instrumental in publishing Guzman's book last year entitled "The Fist and the Letter." At the book launching in September 2009 he emphasized the end of SL's armed struggle and hinted at Guzman's interest in entering politics. End note.)

14. (C) COMMENT. Following the radio broadcast of Artemio's plea, Prime Minister Javier Velasquez Quesquén and Defense Minister Rafael Rey Rey immediately rejected the idea of negotiating with SL members, and expressed skepticism of Artemio's message. Analysts are scratching their heads about what these events mean about SL in the long run. Several Embassy contacts involved in the Peruvian Nationalist Party and emerging political movements have told us they believe Guzman's armed struggle is over and the time has come for SL to enter electoral politics. Others, who have asserted that the UHV and VRAE factions may not be entirely divorced from one another, take a longer view of SL and wonder if Acuerdistas' flirtation with truces and electoral politics is part of an overall strategy that secretly includes the ongoing armed struggle in the VRAE. End comment.  
McKinley